



The Lab Notebook



EDISON DAY IS JUNE 4: Celebrate the NPS Centennial

Join us for the big day. Thomas Edison NHP is joining the Township of West Orange, the West Orange Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown West Orange Alliance to produce an even grander Edison Day/Street Fair. More vendors, a classic car show, a beer garden on Alden Street, and musical performances will be just a few of the highlights. In addition, the Township will be hosting "Slide the City," a water slide on Mt. Pleasant Avenue that should be as much fun for spectators as participants. The Street Fair Committee is working to harmonize all events so that visitors will be able to move easily along Main Street.

Because Main Street will be so busy, Glenmont will be closed to the public, and all Park programs will all take place at the Laboratory complex.

The National Park Service Centennial Band from New Orleans Jazz NHP will be on site conducting workshops and making wax cylinder recordings. The Tri-County Radio Association will "activate" the Park and make contact with other amateur radio operators worldwide. HackNCraft of Montclair will hold its maker fair. The Northern New Jersey chapter of the American Chemical Society will help kids conduct experiments. Speedwell Village will be here for hands-on demonstrations. A host of children's activities will be available under the tent on Vault 12. We'll see you there.

Edison Media Arts Consortium Hosts Premiere and Awards Ceremony

Over 80 film fans attended a program of the New Jersey Young Filmmakers Festival at the Park on Saturday May 21. The evening combined film premieres with an awards presentation. The Festival, a project of the Thomas Edison Media Arts Consortium, provides young filmmakers who live or study in New Jersey the opportunity to exhibit work and have it evaluated by professionals the media arts. Since its inception, the Festival has recognized, celebrated, and encouraged emerging young talent in New Jersey, the birthplace of motion pictures. The Park's partnership with the Consortium continues with the premiere of a new film made by students at New Jersey City University. The program will be Wednesday June 22 at 5:30 in our Visitor Center.

New
Jersey
Young
Filmmakers



Rider University Receives NEA Grant for Opera Program at Edison

Rider University in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, has received a \$10,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to support its CoOPERative Fellows Program for post-graduate vocal artists. In addition to recitals and a presentation of *The Barber of Seville* in Princeton, the program will bring its singers to Thomas Edison NHP for a daytime performance. On that day, middle school students will tour the Music Room, listen to Edison opera recordings, then hear the same selections sung by the CoOPERative artists, whose performances will be recorded on wax cylinder.

Message from the Superintendent

The 2016 Centennial Edison Day/West Orange Street Fair on June 4th is the official kick-off to summer in my book! The weather is warming up and so is the excitement and energy of our Centennial Year! We are dressed for the centennial party, with banners along Main Street and two large, colorful ones on Building 5 which made the front cover of this edition.

The National Park Service has also launched a new, fresh, and greatly improved website that works across all device platforms, and we are excited to offer FREE Wi-Fi for our visitors in Building 1, the courtyard, and Building 11. Great centennial news abounds in this edition of *The Lab Notebook* with partnership grants awarded for replacing downed trees at Glenmont and undertaking exciting arts programming at the labs. Speaking of the arts, it is so great to see and honor the talent and artistic ability of our staff with Beth Miller's contribution to the NPS Centennial Art Exhibit at the Statue of Liberty. Congratulations!

Of course the work of rehabilitating, repairing and conserving the buildings and artifacts is a never ending process and the warmer weather has ushered in work on a number of significant projects at the lab complex; a couple are featured on page 3. Finally, the park was honored on May 24 by the American Chemical Society's North New Jersey Chapter with a *Salute to Excellence Award* for "... its commitment to improving the public's perceptions of chemistry..." So a big congratulations and thank you to all who contribute so much each and every day to making this park relevant to the American people—this award is for you!

Now it's on to our marquee event of the year, the 2016 Centennial Edison Day/West Orange Street Fair on June 4! You don't want to miss it. I'll see you on the 4th!

Sincerely,
Tom Ross



NJ History and Historic Preservation Conference

As part of the Conference, the Park will host two workshops on June 8, both starting at 1:30. One, in Building 11, will focus on Collections Management, and the other, at Glenmont, will cover Cultural Land-

scapes. At 5:30 the Conference reception will take place under the big top on Vault 12.

The following day, June 9, the Conference moves to Seton Hall University in South Orange. Three Edison staff members will make presentations at the sessions.

For information on fees and registration, visit the Conference website: <http://www.njpreservationconference.org/>.

Friends of Edison Hold Annual Meeting

The Friends of Thomas Edison NHP held their annual meeting on Monday April 18, 2016. The group welcomed its new Chair, Arthur Gordon, a tireless volunteer at the Park. The new Treasurer is Jerry Guarino, and the new Secretary is Hap Bojsza, the former Chair.

New Trustees are Jack Boyle, Tim Pagano, Dr. Robert Bagoff, Bernice Manshel, and Monica Perkowski. The Continuing Trustees are Larry Fast, Susan McCartney, Megan Brill, and Keri Knowles.

Outgoing Trustees are Nina Barszcz (who served most recently as Secretary), Kip Rowan, and Judi Santi, whom we thank for their service to the Friends and the Park. We hope to enjoy their continuing active support in the future.



Arthur Gordon, new Chair of the Friends.

Friends of Thomas Edison National Historical Park
Lighting the future by preserving the past



Mather High School students planting trees at Glenmont.

Garden Club of the Oranges Donates Trees to Glenmont

The Garden Club of the Oranges received a grant of \$4,000 to pay for 20 trees that students from The Mather School in New York City planted on May 24. The grant was awarded by the New Jersey Committee of the Garden Club of America. This committee is comprised of the 12 clubs in New Jersey who are member clubs of The Garden Club of America. The national organization's theme this year is "2016 Park It," celebrating the National Park Service Centennial. We are grateful for the Garden Club's

dedication and support (not to mention hard work) during this anniversary year.

Students from the Stephen T. Mather Building Arts & Craftsmanship High School visited the Park last year for hands-on training in the building arts and landscaping. During their visit this year they took part in wood shingle fabrication on the gatehouse, repairing the wooden track around the Black Maria, and replacing metal sign posts at Glenmont with wooden ones. Landscaping work included pruning, and pest identification and management in addition to the tree planting.

Watch Out! Tesla Is Coming

Don't forget, on July 10 we celebrate Nikola Tesla's birthday. Acting Supervisory Museum Curator Jerry Fabris will conduct a cylinder recording session, and Archivist Lenny DeGraaf will present a public program putting the Tesla/Edison controversy in context.

Conservators Spruce Up Railroad Trucks



In late April a team from Conservation Solutions, Inc., completed a thorough cleaning of the two electric rail-

road trucks that face Main Street in front of Buildings 1 and 5. The technicians removed surface accretions such as salt, dirt, bird droppings, loose paint, and biological growth. They coated the trucks with hot wax to retard future damage, consolidated the inner wood panels and cleaned, repainted, and waxed the accompanying plaques. The trucks are now ready for Edison Day and the next several decades.

Two unidentified men resting on the electric locomotive at Menlo Park, 1882.



Fixing the Chimney and the Water Tower

For the past several weeks a team of workers has been busy performing much needed repairs to the chimney atop the Building 6 Power House. Meanwhile, scaffolding rises for repair work on the water tower. (Should we offer rides in the crane bucket or conduct scaffold-climbs on Edison Day?)



“Breaking New Ground” with the Centennial Art Exhibit

Glenmont curator Beth Miller reports on the Park Service’s Centennial Art Exhibit:

To mark its 100th birthday, the National Park Service is pulling out all the stops to develop programming that connects traditional Park audiences with new ones. One recent example is the NPS Centennial Art Exhibit which was hosted by the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island during this past winter. Art projects are taking a starring role in the Centennial celebration lineup, but this exhibition was unique in featuring works of art created by NPS staff members in the tri-state area, giving the public a rare peak into the lives and interests of Park employees they might otherwise encounter only as the ranger leading their interpretive program or the curator answering their research request.

I contributed a work to the show, “The Seat,” a representation of a bench on the Glenmont grounds, and was invited to attend an artist reception in late January and to offer a gallery talk for visitors. I was amazed at the variety of art in several media created by park staff: a yarn replica of the NPS arrowhead and a parade-sized American flag made of utility hooks, for example. The artists captured the drama of their jobs as well as their passion for their Parks. Brent Talbott of the Statue of Liberty staff presented a camping cooler used by his family on his boyhood trips to National Parks. The souvenirs he collected from Park gift shops were carefully arranged inside; the cooler even has tooth marks left by a hungry bear encountered during a trip out west. Kevin Daley, also on the Statue of Liberty staff, supplied a moving photograph of a man in a baseball cap comforting the Statue of Liberty Superintendent in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Upon closer inspection the viewer realizes the man in the baseball cap is NPS Director Jon Jarvis.

I learned a lot from visitors who saw my work, and it was clear that viewing the art spurred visitors to make a trip to the Parks where the art originated. Many planned to add Edison to their list of must-see destinations. It reminded me of what a powerful communicator art can be and how it opens the door for new conversations and ideas. Soon you can experience this art yourself and form your own ideas because Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island will soon be launching an on-line virtual exhibit to feature the works in the show. Stay tuned for details.



Editor’s Note: If you’d like to see our own art exhibition, check out the Dream Rocket display of students’ textile artwork on view throughout the summer on all three floors of the elevator tower next to Building 5. This year’s theme is “Find Your Dream Park.”



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Thomas Edison National Historical Park
211 Main Street
West Orange, NJ 07052

Thomas Edison National Historical Park was established to preserve and protect Thomas Alva Edison's West Orange Laboratory, home, and collections for the education and inspiration of people worldwide.

Thomas Edison National Historical Park
211 Main Street
West Orange, NJ 07052
Web site: www.nps.gov/edis
Email: edis_superintendent@nps.gov

Visitor Information
973-736-0550 x11
Fax: 973-243-7172

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

Volunteers-In-Parks Coordinator Thomas Edison National Historical Park

Michelle Mihalkovitz
973-736-0550 x31 phone
michelle_ortwein@nps.gov

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Editor
Edward Wirth

Contributors

Hap Bojsza
Joan Harris-Rico
Pamela Mayer
Michelle Mihalkovitz
Beth Miller
John O'Reilly
Karen Sloat-Olsen

Comments? Write to:
Thomas Ross, Superintendent
Thomas Edison National Historical Park
211 Main Street
West Orange, NJ 07052



The American Chemical Society North Jersey Local Section

hereby recognizes

Thomas Edison National Historical Park in West Orange, NJ

with a

Salute to Excellence

for its commitment to improving the public's perceptions of chemistry. Thomas Edison Museum allows visitors to explore Edison's laboratory and factory and learn about his inventions that "changed the world." Special events, like Edison Day, bring specialists to the museum and allow the public to experiment, like Edison did. The museum mirrors Edison's thinking: "I never did a day's work in my life. It was all fun."



Luciano Mueller

Luciano Mueller PhD.

Chair, North Jersey Section ACS

May 24, 2016

Date

The Park received this "Salute to Excellence" award from the North Jersey Local Section of the American Chemical Society on May 24. Members of the Section will be here on Edison Day demonstrating once again that chemistry can be, as Edison himself said, "...all fun."